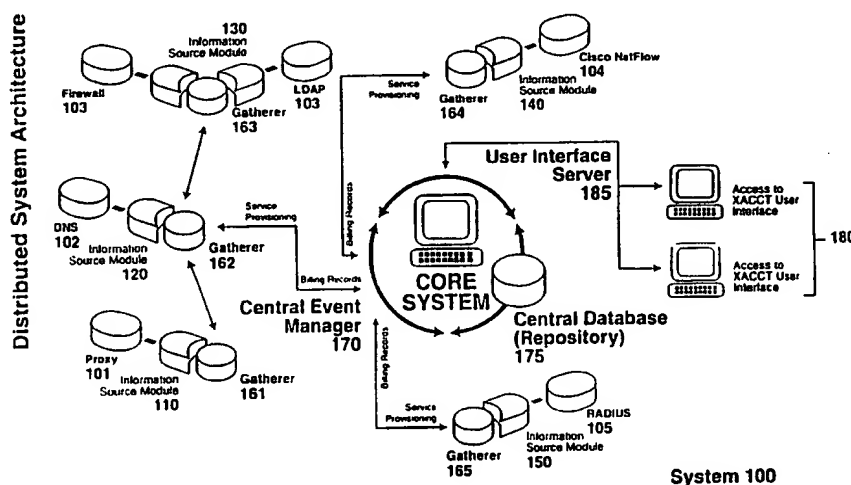




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(54) Title: NETWORK ACCOUNTING AND BILLING SYSTEM AND METHOD



(57) Abstract

In some embodiments, network traffic information is captured at network information sources. These sources provide detailed information about the network communications transactions at a network device. Importantly, different types of sources can provide different types of information. Gatherer devices gather the detailed information from the various information source devices and convert the information into standardized information. The gatherer devices can correlate the gathered information with account information for network transaction accounting. Manager devices manage the gatherer devices and store the gathered standardized information. The manager devices eliminate duplicate network information that may exist in the standardized information. The manager devices also consolidate the information. Importantly, the information stored by the manager devices represents the consolidated, account correlated, network transaction information that can be used for billing or network accounting. The system thereby provides a distributed network accounting and billing system.

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/US 98/24963

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 6 G06F17/60 G06F17/30

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 6 G06F H04M

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
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X	REDMOND C ET AL: "Dynamic charging for information services" IEE COLLOQUIUM ON CHARGING FOR ATM - THE REALITY ARRIVES (REF. NO.1997/328), LONDON, UK, 20 NOV. 1997, pages 13/1-10, XP002101632 1997, London, UK, IEE, UK see page 1-10 --- -/--	1-38

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

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